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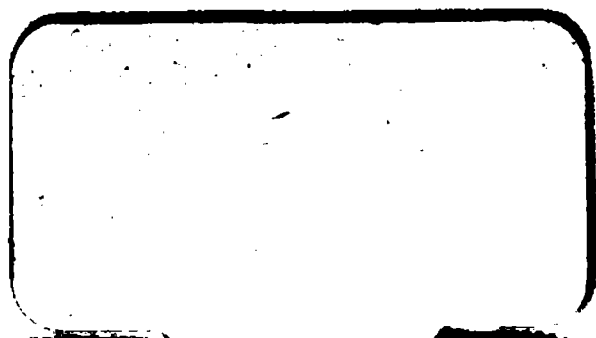
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(Amer.)



Ryan

NDI



***A WHISPER OF FIRE***

"For each one of us has that within him which needs only to be kindled to become fire, and only to be blown upon to flame; and when it has blazed there is no quenching it, but it must burn and burn forever. And whatsoever it touches it makes clean; and its ashes are not dead but shall live again."

Not in RD.  
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PM

# A WHISPER OF FIRE

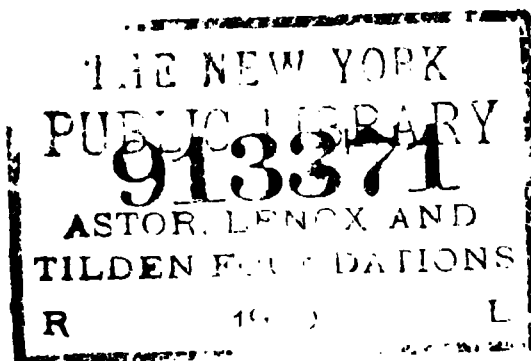
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BOSTON  
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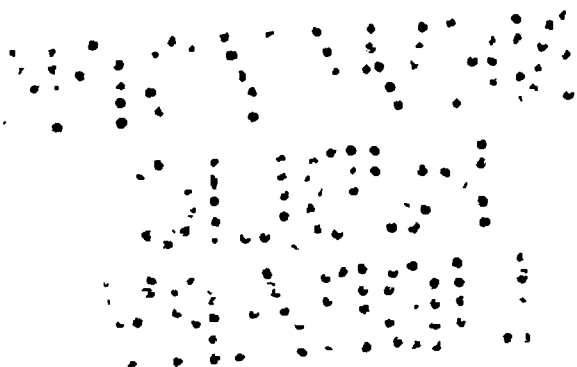
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*Wood*



## THE HOUR GLASS

When a woman's golden hair begins to take on  
    threads of silver,  
When flowers and trees are budding,  
When grasses start and birds are mating,  
When the blood flows quickly,  
And the breasts fill round and full,  
When she knows there are to be no children, no  
    love,—  
What shall the woman say to herself?



## WOMAN

Woman waiting, always waiting:  
Waiting for the womb to win release,  
Waiting for the dead to be brought home,  
Waiting for Love to come, for Love to speak,  
Waiting for a letter, a face, a message,  
Counting the still hours of the night.  
Waiting, always waiting: It is hard to be a  
woman.

## HUNGRY-HEARTED

Brown-bosomed Italian mother,  
Hold close the tender babe upon your breast.  
Drink deep the subtle ecstasy of little  
Hands caressing your tired face.  
Warm lips are drawing life and giving it.  
Drink deep the subtle ecstasy,  
And know how hungry-hearted spinsters envy  
you.

## LONELY HEART

Big world and crowds of people,  
Yet none says: "Thou art all the world to me."  
In the big world's crowds  
The heart aches from loneliness and many voices.

## RESTORE ME

Brown Earth, take me and warm me;  
Soothe me, caress me, show me thy beauty.  
Do not forsake me; I have no other.  
Brown Earth, my heart grows cold.

## IT IS TIME

It is time you came.  
Where are you—  
The other part of me?

You who love as I love,  
Loving all of me,  
You who feel as I feel,  
Being one with me?

# *Kindling*



## THE ABYSS

The lips go pale and falter,  
The hands tremble and turn cold,  
The eyes quiver and see not,  
The whole frame shakes  
Like a mighty ship about to sink;  
For the eyes of Love seek mine.  
There is strange silence. Eternity yawns.  
Is it Love or Death?



## A MISTAKE?

Yesterday a man  
With eyes like stars in the night  
Came and stood before me.  
He had lived.  
Nazareth and Olivet were in his bearing.  
He said, "Come now, come with me."  
Yet I went not.  
Does Love ever pass Love on the journey without knowing?

## THE STARRY NIGHT

Yes, leave me.

I was never used to love.

Go your blithe way,

And look not back at me.

The starry night is over us.

Go swiftly, singing.

## **ELEMENTAL**

**Being woman, have you felt the surge of mighty  
forces**

**At the little touch of man's warm hand upon your  
arm?**

**And have you once cast all Earth's teaching from  
you,**

**Saying, What else matters?**

# *Smoldering*



## PUNISHED

Today I did it—  
A hard task, long put off.  
I cut out my heart  
That throbs and is so warm.  
I cut it out  
And put it by  
To wither.  
I had to punish that heart.  
It was bound to sing and love.

## BETRAYED

Love took me down into the Bottomless Pit and  
left me.

I went, not knowing where, only sure that Love  
was leading . . . .

When I came to the Sun again,

The face of all the World was changed,

I was old, and Love was dead—slain by his own  
hand.

## ALONE

One pressed his face to mine  
And held me in his arms.  
He smoothed my cheek  
And kissed away the rapid, burning tears.  
—I never minded loneliness before.



## MY LITTLE FIRE

It was night.  
I went to the top of a hill  
To build a little fire for love.  
Of twigs and leaves I built it.  
I fanned its feeble breath  
Till it grew large  
And the strong wind of the world  
Took it up.  
I thought the wind would help me,  
But wantonly it blew my fire  
Till there were only ashes.  
I came down the hill shivering.

## LITTLE HOUSE

Yes, little house, I've come home.  
Hide me from hard eyes that pierce.  
Shield me from words that cut.  
Open the windows to the song bird,  
To the clear breeze and the sun.  
Show me the fragrant night and the stars.  
And now build a little fire  
Where I may read and muse.  
Hide me, little house,  
And let the tears come as they will.

## DESOLATE-HEART

They took me in.  
They fed and warmed me.  
They gave me their caresses.  
And yet I am not theirs—  
And they are helpless.  
Desolate-Heart am I,  
Desolate and lonely  
As the lone pine  
On yonder hill against the winter's sky.

*Smoke*



## MY LITTLE CHAIN

There's a little chain around my neck.  
I feel it, though none may see.  
Some links are made of tears  
And some of golden laughter.  
Is it less to me because  
There are more tears than laughter?  
If my eyes grow dim,  
Too old for seeing beauty,  
I'll feel my little chain.

## THE RIDDLE

The night is still,  
The moon and stars look down  
In quiet joy upon the wondrous earth.  
The sea swells rhythmically,  
The warm air throbs and lives.  
My eyes look out across the sea,  
Over the hills, the prairies far away,  
Up through eternity's soft starlit night.  
My restless nature, needing much to satisfy,  
Stirs me to its turbid depths.  
I moan, stretching out my human, futile hands,  
"Oh, Life, what holdest thou for me?"

## AN IRON RING

I wear an iron ring upon my hand  
Made of every time  
I want to touch your hand  
And may not.  
For me there is only the iron ring.



## LET ME GO

Do not come with me now ;  
I am tired and need to be alone.  
I will go away with my unquiet thoughts,  
Out into the night.  
Let me go alone  
And cry my bitter cry  
And see my bitter, barren life.

## THE BURNING PATH

Oh, when I said my prayer last night  
And spoke your name to God,  
Oh, then I knew, I knew Love's might—  
The burning path I trod.

And now I know the bitter woe,  
The bond who would be free.  
Mine is the woe unloved ones know  
For no one prays for me.

## SLIPPING AWAY

Oh, the fields are full of flowers  
And the sky is full of stars,  
But I'm weary, sad and lonely  
All the day.  
And the world is slipping away.  
Oh, the world is slipping away.

## CHILDREN

Seeing a child, I always smile  
And wish that all the world were children,  
So I and all the world  
Might always smile and so be friends.  
Grown-ups so often stare and nudge.  
Only the children always understand.

## FAITH

Blithe have I been with you, Life,  
Blithe and light-hearted;  
Now will you fail me?

No child have I;  
No love have I; no kin.  
Frail is my body  
And my heart lonely.

Blithe have I been with you,  
Blithe and light-hearted,  
Trusting you always.  
Caught in the strife,  
Others have faltered,  
Others strong-hearted;  
I have had faith in you,  
Thinking you true.  
When all was black  
I lay at your feet;  
I kept my faith to you,  
I never doubted.

Blithe have I been,  
Blithe and light-hearted.  
I have so loved,  
So gallantly trusted,  
Giving my all.  
*You cannot betray me!*



*Blaze*





## LISTEN

The little leaves and all the flowers  
Were telling you something today,  
But you would not hear.  
The birds heard it,  
So did the children at play.  
The wind is blowing it in at the window now.  
Will you not listen?

## THE ROSE

Comrade, my comrade,  
You know the fragrance of the rose?  
You know its strength in beauty?  
The joy and warmth it gives rose-lovers?  
You know?  
And you are like the rose.

## FAIRER?

The Sun and Wind have kissed me;  
The Grass and Wind caressed me;  
The Dew and Rain have bathed me;  
The Stars have set my hair with jewels;  
New Music from the Birds has charmed me;  
And the Silences have soothed.

Do I look fairer now to thee?

## AWAY

Sorrows came upon my house.  
You cared; you shared,—  
And oh, the difference to me!  
Now joy has come  
I chafe and want to tell you.  
But oh, how long the days till you are here!

## GOOD NIGHT

Tonight, O friend, O youth,  
Tonight and every night  
I put my kiss upon your brow,  
My kiss that reaches you  
Where'er you go, and says:  
    The silent night befriend you,  
    The watchful stars attend you,  
    Refreshing sleep God send you,—  
My kiss to keep you from all harm.  
And oh, it comforts me to know  
Peace will be with you when you sleep.

## GYPSY DAYS

Green grasses, greenery green;  
Silver birches, silvery sheen;  
    Streamlets running,  
    Plowed fields sunning,  
All on a bright spring day.

Birds are singing, flowerets springing,  
Wild woods ringing, glad thoughts winging,  
    While the heart goes gypsying away.  
Glad, gladsome, joyous May!

*Smoke Again*





## OLD

The cold rain blows outside;  
The warm fire glows within;  
But you in the blinding rain and wind  
Are not so cold as I.

The gray sky looks down on us;  
The old hills frown on us;  
But hills nor sky nor wind nor rain  
Are half so old as I.

## THE HOME-CLUTCH

I love this little house.  
It was here my father died.  
Right here he sat and ceased to breathe.  
This little room holds memories to stock a volume  
    brave.  
Here my sister died. Here one was betrayed.  
Here I bowed my head in lonely anguish.  
The house is cursed and moans.  
And yet I love it.

## A BONNY LITTLE FIRE

One was cold and cheerless,  
Roaming in the gloom.  
Dim-eyed, she staggered on.  
Another wandered cold and weary,  
Not caring where.  
Then, seeing her utter misery,  
He straightway built a fire,  
And called to her to warm her heart.  
"Come, friend," said he, "I've built a little fire;  
Come, feel its glow and warm yourself  
Lest I, too, perish,"  
And, oh, it was a bonny little fire!

## MY PRETTY HAIR

My pretty long brown hair,  
My curling waving soft brown hair,  
My hair with flashing glints of gold,  
Do you forsake the sunlight?  
My pretty hair, you never seemed so fair  
As now the streaks of gray appear,  
That mark of death and gloom and fear,  
Dull gray, the sign of weary care.  
I brush and stroke you fondly,  
My sunshot soft brown hair.

## HOME

Home is where I may weep  
And no one may see.  
Home is where I hurt no one  
And no one hurts me.  
I am weary now.  
Let me go home.

## DEAD FAITH

When the child moved within,  
Her woman heart bounded in mingled fear and  
joy.  
She smiled, sensing the warm lips drawing  
milk,—  
And thrilled with life eternal.

\* \* \* \* \*

They laid the little form beneath the earth.  
Her woman eyes were dull and cold.  
She said, "There is no God."

## O NIGHT

O Night that sings and croons to me,  
O Wind that shouts and calls to me,  
Where do you hide?

I hunt the sky and clouds about,  
I try to find your fortress out,  
What place you bide.

O Night that hides all day from me,  
O Wind that flits across the sea—  
My Love has died.

O Wind, blow low this hour for me,  
Come, Night, come down and cover me—  
What counts beside?



## WHEN

When you can see my inmost soul  
And shudder not,  
Then, O my Love, come close to me!  
When you can scan my meanest thought  
And sorrow not,  
Then give your hand to me.

## MOODS

Tonight my heart is filled with grief ;  
My voice and breast are full of sobs and tears ;  
And I could beat my inner self  
Against the jagged rocks of black and bitter woe  
Till what is I were spent and gone  
Beyond the reach of break of heart and spirit  
pang.

But you are you and understand—  
O strong-winged gull that flew this way one day.

## EARTH

O Earth, when my body is weary,  
And the life goes out of my soul,  
And I care not for living or dying,  
Or keeping my spirit whole,  
I turn to you, the Great Mother,  
And I put my breast against yours;  
"Oh, take and remake me,"  
I whisper, "Take and remake."  
Then you take me;  
I feel the warm earth life,  
Your teeming strength charges through—  
Till I sleep and am strong;  
And to Earth, the Great Mother,  
To you is my song,  
To you is my song.

*Flame*



## INVINCIBLE

Twice during this little week  
The flame of life near faded out.  
Twice I staked my all and saw it vanish.  
Just as it flowed away for the last time,  
Two flames burned up where one had been.

## ADVERSITY

O little hope that leads me on,  
O flame of faith in wind and storm,  
You fail me now?  
Today I am two living flames.  
The fire near quenched awhile  
Burns red more deep and strong  
In bitter wind and stinging blast.

## BROWN BIRDS

Listen! There's a merry brown bird  
Wants to fly away,  
Touching wings with you,  
Touching wings with you.  
"Where does she want to go?"  
She wants to go anywhere,  
Anywhere if you will sing,  
If you will sing.  
O brown bird, be merry.  
Go where she wants.  
Go and sing,  
Go and sing.



## AN INVITATION

Lover of the surging surf,  
Lover of the sea,  
Lover of the stars above,  
Can you not love me?

Lover of the sun's glow,  
Lover of the dawn,  
I am blithe as winged bird,  
I am fair to see.

## MY BODY

Oh glad am I of a strong lithe body,  
Glad it can move to my will!  
Oh strong is my body,  
And light is my step,  
White are my arms  
And firm is my flesh:  
I'm a child of the air and the sun.  
I am light; I can trip.  
I am strong; I can grip.  
I can bend, I can climb, I can run.  
Clear is the eye, red is the lip.  
I have health.  
I have wealth.  
I'm a child of the sun.  
    I am strong.

## MARRIED

To wake in the night  
And hear him breathing, breathing,  
So close and warm  
Beside the person that is I,—  
It is so strange and sweet and new,  
Like riding out alone upon the sea,  
Like sitting on a rim of moon,  
Fearful and ecstatic, in the sky.

## TRAMPING

You and I  
And a biting wind,  
A hungry day  
And an out-door fire;  
Nuts and apples,  
Maybe some corn!  
Do you mind the taste of fire?  
Do you mind the taste of smoke?

## THE TASTE OF FIRE

Do you know the taste of fire?  
The wild, elemental flavor,  
The haunting, wind-scented savor,  
The primal, matchless fragrance  
Of food smoke-scented with wood fire?  
Do you know the taste of fire?

Do you know the look of fire?  
The burnt-orange, red and yellow,  
The living, leaping glory  
Of the mellow—  
The blended orange, red and yellow?  
Do you know the fire of sunset,  
Do you know the fire of sunrise,  
Do you know the fire of gypsies,  
And do you know the hearth fire?

## THE MIRACLE

Precious breath of life,  
Small, marvelous body,  
Dawning mind, strange little waking soul!  
And can we make thee perfect—so—  
Out of our bodies, at our will?  
O perfect wonder!  
The gods still roam the earth, for we are gods.

## **COME**

**Come into the flowery fields**

**With me tomorrow.**

**I will make you priceless chains of flowers ;**

**I will ask the grass to talk to you.**

## SYMPATHY

The flowers all love me.  
They know when I am sad.  
When I go by they lift  
Their dewy faces  
To greet me and bring me comfort.



## THE SAVIOR

When the mainspring of a life has snapped,  
When the stars have all gone out,  
And the fragrance of flowers  
Hurts like the cut of a knife,  
When nothing seems to matter,  
It is good to work.

## THE SLAYER

You see, Dear Soul of mine,  
Every doubt is a stab  
That leaves a hole.  
How many holes  
Can one heart take from another  
Before it vanishes?  
How can you keep me from doubting?

## THE SADDEST PERSON

Sometimes I think  
I am the saddest person  
Alive in all the world;  
And when my heart cries out  
And says it surely now will break,  
I lift my head and shake away the tears.  
I see that I must smile  
And laugh and play  
Lest sadness break your heart.

## MY LOVER

Do you know my lover's name?  
It is Sleep, sweet young Sleep.  
She awaits me every evening  
More faithful far than any friend.  
She holds me in her gentle arms at night,  
Crooning like a young mother.  
Her hands are soft as infants'.  
Her white young bosom is for me alone.  
Caressingly she holds me  
Through every night,  
And yet she never wearies me.  
She frowns at Dawn  
And then smiles back at me,  
Asking "Hast had enough?"

## UNMEASURED

Yesterday I loved you  
With all my strength and heart and soul,  
With all my waking and my sleeping self,  
And knew that I would love you still the same  
If I were dead and lay  
A hundred fathoms deep within the sea,  
Or covered o'er with earth a mountain high.

I loved you then with all the love I had,  
But now today I love you more than that—  
I love you with a love scarce dreamed of yesterday,  
And marvel at the ceaseless miracle.

## GOD-MAGIC

God of my long seeking,  
God found in bitterest pain,  
I turn to You now in my happiness  
To tell You that again  
I am caught up in Your love,  
In the love of You and of life,  
That the old glory still holds me,  
That Your God-magic is on me again,  
God I had looked for so long,  
God I find over and over again!



*Coals*





## YOUNG HEART

I am Young Heart—  
Shall I tell you my secret?  
I am Young Heart and can never grow old.  
My body is like a green bow :  
It bends but it will not break.

My heart is an old violin ;  
On it the Winds of Life play,  
Making me younger all the while.  
My child eyes dance  
And my young feet trip the Great Highway.

I am Young Heart.  
Shall I tell you my secret?

## WARM HANDS

They are calling boys to battle,  
Calling men to slay each other,  
Where the horses snort and rear  
And the smell of blood of mortals  
And the haunting, curdling Hell-fear  
Make them drunken savage devils,  
Make them worse than maddened cattle.

They are calling men to battle,  
Boys with warm hands and white foreheads,—  
Love and life—then the death rattle.  
They are calling men and boys  
In the springtime of the year,  
In the may-time and the mating.

Let me hold your hand the closer—  
Some are calling, some are killing—  
Are you here? Closer, closer!  
Are you here?

## THE SCYTHER

I am the Scythe.  
All winter have I hung in the barn,  
Fearing the wet and the rust.  
Now I feel my edge,  
And I long for the Spring—  
Spring and Summer!  
I wonder, Is the new tender grass  
Yet started under the snow?  
I hunger for it now,  
With a blade sharp and unflinching.  
All Winter have I heard  
Its gentle swish, swish,  
Sighing, sighing, as it falls.  
None awaits the Spring—and the tender grass—  
As do I, for I am the Scythe.

## SIX O'CLOCK

Tonight when I went out to walk,  
I saw the people coming home from work;  
And as I met them one by one,  
Their steps were lagging  
And their faces gray.  
The air was balmy with the faintest tinge of  
Spring;  
The grass was waking; life filled everything.  
I said, "To be free from routine—  
Office work—is good  
When Spring is in the air."  
Then feeling in my heart  
What they had suffered through the day,  
I was pierced through  
With stabbing thoughts to know  
What lifted up my heart—this Spring—  
Was that which made them listless,  
Made them shirk and hate their work;  
It was the very thing  
Made caged-up men,  
Boys, girls and housed-in women  
Detest and hate good honest work.  
And so I fell to mourning:

It is so good to stand erect  
And breathe and smile and feel the sun;  
It hurts my heart to see them, limp and pale,  
Come trudging home when work is done.

## YOUR FOOTSTEP

I smoothed my hair  
And changed my dress  
And made my mood reposeful for your coming.  
I wanted you to see me as you like to see me best.

Then as the hour grew late  
And you were still away,  
Black thoughts of danger met and seized me:  
“What—Oh, God!—what should I do  
If, like our neighbor who was drowned last  
week,  
He never came again!”

And then once more I hurried to the window  
And pressed my face against the pane,  
And stayed there dumb with dread and fear  
Until I heard your footstep on the walk.

## MY GARDEN

This Sunday night, upon the porch,  
I sit and fold my hands  
And feel my garden growing.  
A little sprinkle of warm rain  
Falls lightly on the thirsting leaves.  
The corn gives back a pleasant sound;  
The vines send out a fragrance  
Strange and pungent as old myrrh;  
The blossoms swell,—  
And all lift up their heads as if in thanks.

Indoors my lover's voice is heard  
In laughter with the children.  
'Twould be so easy to be glad  
If I could once forget the war—

Homes like ours—wrecked;  
Gardens like this—laid waste;  
Books and pictures—burned;  
Children—hungry and orphaned;  
Boys like ours—groaning, bleeding;  
Men like mine—dead, dead.

I wonder: Do other women find it hard to live  
today?



## COURAGE

What should I do  
If when your eyes met mine,  
Their friendliness grew cold,  
Then swiftly moved away?  
What should I do?  
Not weep nor grieve—not I.  
But I would smile and look at you,  
Smile as the mother smiles  
At silvering hair,  
Smile as good women smile at death,  
Smile as one hearing the first earth  
Re-echo in the new-made grave.

## CHURCH

I go in through the arched high doorway  
Down the dim cool quiet aisles,  
Life holds me by the hand,  
I bow my head in reverence and love.  
The organ rolls out its glory,  
My soul thrills and quickens,  
God is revealed in perfect joy and beauty.  
The warm blood mounts,  
I am remade.  
I never remember coming out of church.

## THE FULL EAR

Watching in the dawn light—  
Hear the waving corn!  
Sitting lone and helpless  
While a woman's spirit goes—  
The green corn ripples  
And the dawn wind blows.  
Watching while the soul goes  
Alone, afar, outborne,—  
Oh, the chilling dawn wind,  
Oh, the waving corn!

## REST

Wind across the ocean,  
I must sleep.  
I will lie here in the grass;  
You can soothe me as you pass,  
Wind from off the deep.  
Will you cool my burning brow,  
Stay my hands and teach them how  
To take delight in rest?  
Stop my feet  
And still my thoughts  
From a feverish quest?  
Wind of ocean,  
Help me rest!  
Soothe me, help me face anew  
The touchy world  
And be my best.

## COMING HOME

You say you're coming home.  
Was "home" the word?  
Home to me, did you say?  
Ah, I had almost come to disbelieve  
That it had ever been—our love.  
So long the months can be,  
So poignant was my loneliness.  
I had grown so used to being left alone,  
I almost thought it all a dream—  
Our being here together.  
I did not know how deep had been the silent ache  
Until I read your words today:  
"I'm coming home regardless of the work."

## THE CORN

The rain is over  
And I must hoe the corn.  
The tassels soon will be showing;  
The reddening silk will peep out of the ears,  
And the milk will flow into the kernels.  
Each stalk is like a maiden  
Coming to womanhood.  
The sewing and the other work  
Will have to wait.  
The growing corn needs the hoe  
To let air and sun and moisture  
Down to the roots.  
Then the kernels will fill  
Full of sweet white milk.

## **I WONDER**

**Do people find it very strange  
When they put coal into a range  
That it becomes alive?  
And do they marvel that the black and dead  
Can come to life and be so red?**

## COMPANY

They came;  
They stayed to dinner and to tea;  
We talked and read aloud  
And sat about;  
Then talked some more.  
Once or twice I thought:  
It is so pleasant to have  
Folks come to see us;  
We must have them oftener.

Then in a while they went—  
Out into the frosty night,  
Beneath the stars,  
Crunching the crisp snow,  
To take a train.

We closed the doors and windows,  
Banked the fires for a long winter's night,  
Put out the lights  
And thought: How good to be alone again!





*Ashes*



## THE WIND

Wind among the floating clouds,  
Wind among the trees,  
Tell me of your journey's end  
To the far-off seas.

## EVERY NIGHT

Every night I put my arms around my neck  
And smoothe my hair  
As anyone who loved me dear might do.  
And when I'm nearly off to sleep  
I say a prayer  
And wish that every child might have  
Some one to love her too.

## THE FIRE-FLY

Fire-fly, Fire-fly,  
Let me see your lantern.  
Will your light go out in rain?  
I will let you go again;  
I won't cause you any pain.  
Fire-fly, let me see your lantern.

Do you carry gas or oil?  
Have you battery—lightning coil?  
Is it wood or coal you burn?  
Did it take you long to learn?  
Tell me where you keep your matches.

Are you made of bits of moon?  
Is your lantern on your shoon?  
Won't you come again till June?  
Please to let me see your lantern.

## THE BATH

Water on my eyes and mouth,  
Water on my ears,  
Water on my neck and brow—  
    I am bathing in the sun—  
Water in my arm-pits,  
Water on my arms,  
Water on my feet and legs—  
    Morning, let me splash and play,  
    Morning, keep the day away—  
    Water is such fun!

## THE ELECTRIC LIGHT

When it is night  
And I go in the house,  
I pull a little cord  
Or press a button  
To make it light.  
Then, for an instant, while the place is dark  
And still as any mouse,  
I hold my breath and—Hark!  
A little click, a spark—  
And all the room is bright.  
But how it works,  
Or whence it comes,  
Or whether God or man  
Has made its magic,  
I do not know nor can  
I find the meaning of the miracle.



## A SEED

A little seed put in the ground—  
There is no sign of life.  
The seed seems dead as dead can be;  
If one should cut it with a knife,  
He'd see how dead a seed can be.

A little water, sun and air,  
Some magic from the soil;  
Then something at its very core  
Begins to move  
And it is dead no more.  
It feels the sun;  
It sips a drink;  
It almost seems to stretch and think;  
And from the soil and sun and air  
It draws whatever they will share  
To make a radish, carrot, beet,  
Or something else as good to eat.

## SMOKE

It is so cold out-doors today  
There's not a single child at play,  
And from the house across the way  
Rises a thin wisp of smoke.  
It is so quiet in the house—  
What was that—Was it a mouse?  
I think it is a year since anybody spoke.  
The cat sleeps on; she never woke.  
There is a splendid icicle outside—  
My sled—But it's too cold to slide.  
The only thing that's moving is the smoke.  
Where does smoke come from?  
Where does it go?  
If I could follow some smoke  
Before it got lost or melted or broke—  
There! There! Oh, where does it go?

## MY A B C'S

It is so wonderful  
To put together  
The funny little letters  
To make a word;  
And then again  
The funny little words  
To tell a thought, and bring  
A kindling of the eye,  
A flush upon the cheek,  
To let one know  
The sudden alchemy of heart and mind.  
It is so wonderful  
And I have marvelled much  
Since learning A B C'S.

## **BLEST**

**What have I done  
And who am I  
That I should have  
Such good supply  
Of gladness in the sun?**

## NOW YOU GUESS

Snow and ice and running water—  
Which is the wonderfulest of these three?  
She of the window-pane, Jack Frost's daughter,  
She is most wonderful to me.

To draw the patterns on the pane  
Perhaps she takes a pencil from the fairies.  
Who knows?—Maybe she simply moves her cane  
Across the glass to make some leaves and grass.  
Some say it is a magic brush and paint she  
carries,

Over seas, over hills, over prairies,  
Upon her journeys in the frosty winter night.  
And then again, they say, perhaps she blows her  
breath,

Like mimicking the wind  
As it comes whirling, curling,  
Across the frothing billows,  
Across the rolling hill-tops,  
And the bare, flat plain.

How does she make the patterns on the pane?  
I do not know the secret. None the less  
I have tried and tried again  
To make it plain.  
Now it is your turn to guess.











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